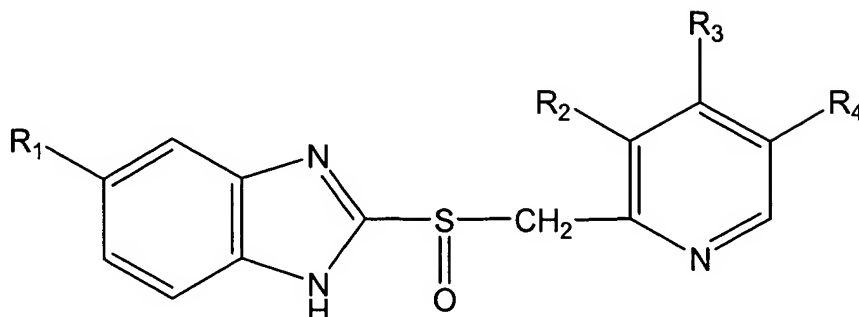


1. (currently amended) ~~An oral~~ Oral pharmaceutical preparation in the form of pellets containing a benzimidazole compound of formula I



in which R<sub>1</sub> is hydrogen, methoxy or difluoromethoxy, R<sub>2</sub> is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy, R<sub>3</sub> is methoxy, 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy or 3-methoxypropoxy and R<sub>4</sub> is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy, comprising

- (a) an inert core
- (b) to which is applied a layer containing an active ingredient which contains the benzimidazole compound of formula I
- (c) one or more optional separating layers and
- (d) an outer layer comprising an enteric coating,

~~characterized in that~~ wherein the benzimidazole compound of formula I is mixed together with microcrystalline cellulose.

2. (currently amended) ~~The pharmaceutical~~ Pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, in which the benzimidazole compound of formula I is omeprazole, lansoprazole, rabeprazole or pantoprazole.

3. (currently amended) ~~The pharmaceutical~~ Pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1 or 2, in which the microcrystalline cellulose is composed of particles having a mean particle size of 100 µm or less.

4. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 3, in which the microcrystalline cellulose is composed of particles having a mean particle size of 50  $\mu\text{m}$  or less.
5. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 4, in which the microcrystalline cellulose is composed of particles having a particle size of about 20  $\mu\text{m}$ .
6. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 3, in which the particle size distribution of the microcrystalline cellulose is such that less than 10% of the particles are 250  $\mu\text{m}$  or greater in size and less than 50% of the particles are 75  $\mu\text{m}$  or greater in size.
7. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 4, in which the particle size distribution of the microcrystalline cellulose is such that less than 2% of the particles are 250  $\mu\text{m}$  or greater in size and less than 30% of the particles are 75  $\mu\text{m}$  or greater in size.
8. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 5, in which the particle size distribution of the microcrystalline cellulose is such that less than 0.1% of the particles are 250  $\mu\text{m}$  or greater in size and less than 1% of the particles are 75  $\mu\text{m}$  or greater in size.
9. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 1 or 2, in which the microcrystalline cellulose has a bulk density of 0.30  $\text{g}/\text{cm}^3$  or less.
10. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 9, in which the microcrystalline cellulose has a bulk density of 0.30  $\text{g}/\text{cm}^3$  or less.
11. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to one of claim 1 to 10, in which the layer with the active ingredient contains a binder which is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose or hydroxypropylcellulose.

12. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to ~~one of~~ claims 1 ~~to 11~~, in which the amount of microcrystalline cellulose is 25% to 150%, based on the weight of the amount of benzimidazole compound of formula I.

13. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 1 ~~one of claims 1 to 12~~, which has a separating layer containing microcrystalline cellulose and a binder.

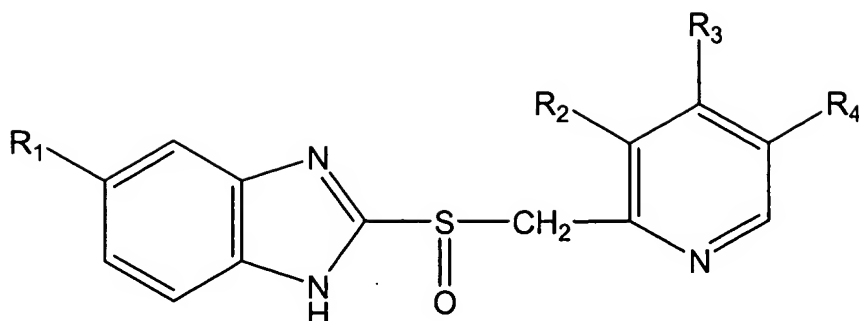
14. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to claim 13, in which the separating layer contains a binder which is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose or hydroxypropylcellulose.

15. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical ~~Pharmaceutical~~ preparation according to any one of claims 13 or 14, in which the separating layer contains microcrystalline cellulose in the amount of 25% to 100% by weight based on the amount of binder.

16. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ for manufacturing a pharmaceutical preparation according to ~~one of the~~ claim 1 ~~to 15~~, in which the benzimidazole compound of formula I is applied to an inert core to thereby form a layer with active ingredient, to which layer with active ingredient a separating layer is optionally applied, and an outer layer in the form of an enteric coating is applied.

17. (currently amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to claim 16, in which the layer containing the active ingredient is applied from an aqueous dispersion.

18. (currently amended) A method ~~Use of microcrystalline cellulose~~ for improving the stability of a benzimidazole compound of formula I



in which

R1 is hydrogen, methoxy or difluoromethoxy,

R2 is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy,

R3 is methoxy, 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy or 3-methoxypropoxy and

R4 is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy,

wherein said compound is mixed with microcrystalline cellulose to form a pellet comprising an inert core, an active ingredient layer, one or more optional separating layers and an outer layer comprising an enteric coating. ~~in the layer with active ingredient of a pellet which is formed from an inert core, a layer containing an active ingredient, one or more optional separating layers and an outer layer consisting of an enteric coating.~~

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein ~~Use according to claim 18,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ the benzimidazole compound of formula I is omeprazole, lansoprazole, rabeprazole or pantoprazole.

20. canceled.